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immobility during the time of waiting; for this would make it impossible to bring our full contribution of faith and experience into a re-united Church. In the present writer's view this consideration has a direct bearing on such a question as the place and service of women in the Church.

There is also a danger that certain churches may look on the movement towards unity too much in a one-dimensional way, as concerned with the line which connects each with some other Church—for example, in the case of the Church of Scotland, that which connects Edinburgh with Lambeth. But the problem is essentially two-dimensional, and so is at once more complex and more hopeful. Around each of us on the theological map are churches whose chief emphasis falls on very various aspects of Christian truth. Different lines of approach may thus be tried simultaneously towards a fuller understanding, and different affinities may be discovered. Thus no two churches need feel that, if unforeseen difficulties be found on the way towards a contemplated union, the whole quest for unity need therefore be abandoned.

One final word on the nature of this task of conference and the spirit in which it must be approached.

It is not an easy task; for those engaged in it must often be aware of a tension—of what even seems a tug in opposite directions. A double effort is needed, to set forth the testimony of the Church which one is commissioned to represent, and at the same time to understand the testimony of others, to grasp points of view hitherto unfamiliar or antipathetic in the hope of reaching a deeper harmony. If the first motive is exclusively stressed, no progress will be made: each side will be ruled by the fear that, in the process of 'give and take,' all the 'give' will be on their side and all the 'take' on the other. Suspicion will continue to rule, and unity will remain afar off. If, on the other hand—a less probable danger—there is too great a readiness to make concessions, valuable elements in the testimony and life of the different churches may fail to be preserved. The one hopeful way is that all who take part should go forward with open minds, believing that others are seeking for unity as genuinely as themselves; and that all should trust in the guidance of the Spirit, who can show them things of which they have not dreamed. Thus only can the Church give an example of unity to a distracted world.

Recent Foreign Theology.

Varia.

THE general character of this work¹ has already been indicated in THE EXPOSITORY TIMES (June 1936), and there is little to add in explanation or comment on this second part. The textual notes, again, are elaborate and extensive, though it is seldom that there is a serious difference of reading. The editorial notes are largely concerned with references to other Rabbinic and Talmudic writings, though sometimes we find useful explanations of words, especially of Greek and Latin words. The text itself is still the most interesting part of the whole work. Here we have all those features which we have learned to associate with ancient Jewish exegesis. There is the stress laid on individual words and even letters, the fanciful interpretation alternating with good, common sense, application of the lesson, the love of parable and allegory, and the careful citation of learned authority. The Siphre is in no sense, however, a

¹ *Siphre zu Deuteronomium*, Pt. II., ed. by Dr. Louis Finkelstein (Marcus, Breslau; R.M.6.00).

continuous commentary, but rather a selection of important passages, which are treated at some length. Thus, in the present number, we pass from notes on Dt 6⁹ to 11¹⁰, and have an extensive disquisition on the contrast between the land of Israel and that of Egypt. From this point onwards every verse is discussed down to 12⁵, a verse of which the comment still remains to be completed in the next part. About a quarter of the whole work has now been published.

THEODORE H. ROBINSON.

Cardiff.

The Johannine Literature.²

THESE scholarly volumes are a striking combination of two qualities, a religious appreciation of the Fourth Gospel and a critical analysis. Professor

² *Das vierte Evangelium, in seiner ursprünglichen Gestalt verdeutscht und erklärt* (M.6): *Studien zum vierten Evangelium* (M.10.90) (J. C. B. Mohr, Tübingen, 1936).

Hirsch realizes that a single mind is behind the Johannine Gospel, and in his translation he expounds the author's message with genuine fervour. But, especially in the critical *Studien*, where the Greek text is printed and discussed, he seeks to show that this evangelic document has been edited by a Church reviser. That the Apostle John had any connexion with the document, he cannot allow; John and James were stoned to death by the Jews of Jerusalem on the eve of the Roman attack on Jerusalem, as the strange story of Rev 11¹⁻¹³ is held to imply. It was some Gentile Christian from northern Syria who composed the Gospel, desiring to distinguish Christianity from Judaism, and employing non-synoptic material as well as a lost source. This first-century work was edited, not before the Bar Cochbar rebellion, to which the words of 5⁴³ are held to refer; the reviser sought to identify the Gospel with the Apostle John. In the course of transmission several displacements and interpolations crept into the text, including 'salvation is of the Jews,' and the passages which describe Jesus issuing commands. Professor Hirsch is fond of editors and second hands in criticising the Johannine literature, for he finds that even the First Epistle is evidence for two writers, while the Apocalypse is a compilation of two pieces by the Asiatic presbyter John, one dating from the rough years A.D. 68, 69 (that is, the bulk of 4-22), the other composed later during the reign of Domitian (that is, 1-3). The Gospel is connected with the First Epistle, though Professor Hirsch hesitates to dogmatize on the literary relationship. Two points

on which he lays particular stress are the close intercourse between Syria and Asia Minor in the development of Christianity towards the end of the first century, and also the double front of the Johannine presentation of Christianity, namely, opposition to Judaism and a reaction against pagan or gnostic syncretism. It is the emphasis upon the Person of Jesus which gives the clue to both of these sides of the propaganda. The one writer in English whom Professor Hirsch seems to follow is Professor Bacon. As a rule he follows his own line, especially in the radical revision of the text in the interests of restoring an original gospel which was more spiritual and non-Jewish than the Church editor was prepared to admit. However one may demur to some of his excisions, it is something to find a critic who interprets the text with a sense of its artistic value, its religious passion, and its tenacious though imaginative belief in historical reality. The least convincing parts of Professor Hirsch's argument are his explanation of how the Asiatic churchmen arrived at the tradition that the Apostle John could be associated with the Fourth Gospel, and, secondly, the criteria for arriving at any reasonable conception of the ecclesiastically minded redactor. On the other hand, it must be gratefully acknowledged that the exposition of the Gospel is done with insight and intelligent sympathy, for the most part, even although the tendency is to depreciate any Jewish element at the expense of the Greek spirit.

JAMES MOFFATT.

New York.

Contributions and Comments.

A Note on John xxi. 21.

'Lord, and what shall this man do?'

WHAT was behind this question of Peter's? Of course, did the question stand alone, one might say that Peter was perhaps showing a concern for his fellow-disciple John. Jesus had just had that personal private talk with Peter, and had told him, 'Feed my sheep': was Peter straightway following out that precept? Were that the case then was the question indeed right and proper, and Peter's action entirely praiseworthy. But as we read on we realize that there was something not entirely praiseworthy in this question by Peter: it is followed almost immediately by a kind yet

very definite rebuke by Jesus: 'What is that to thee? follow thou me.' There was something blameworthy, not praiseworthy, in Peter's action.

Was it mere inquisitiveness on the part of Peter concerning his fellow-disciple, an inquisitiveness into which even some jealousy may have entered, as some expositors have held? He had been told what kind of death he should suffer: was he eager to know how John would eventually die? Possibly so; and Jesus never encouraged unprofitable inquisitiveness. He always directed men's thoughts to practical issues. 'Lord, are there few that be saved?' asked one on a previous occasion: Jesus almost ignored the question in His stern and practical reply, 'Strive to enter in at the strait gate.' So